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FILE ONLY

American Held in Nicaragua Described as a 'Rambo' Type

DECATUR, Ala. (UPI)—An American arrested in Nicaragua as a suspected spy was a "Rambo" type working alone in an attempt to win fame and outshine his congressman brother, the leader of a paramilitary organization linked to the accused spy said Monday.

"He thinks he's Sambo," Thomas V. Posey said in a word play on accused spy Sam Hall's first name and the movie commando character "Rambo." Posey is director of a group that calls itself Civilian Materiel Assistance, whose goal is to assist the Nicaraguan *contras*.

"He dresses like it. He wears a headband and everything," Posey said.

The Sandinista government said that Hall, of Dayton, Ohio, was arrested Friday at an air base near Managua. Hall, identified as the brother of Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio), was carrying a map that pinpointed military locations, Sandinista officials said.

'Over-Energetic'

U.S. officials said they have so far been denied access to the man picked up by the Nicaraguans, but Michael Gessel, press secretary to Congressman Hall, there was no doubt about his identity.

"There's really no question in my boss' mind that this is his brother," Gessel said. "The information the Nicaraguan government has been giving out is a description of Sam Hall. The person in question is Sam Hall."

Posey said Hall was jealous of his brother and was "trying to make a name for himself."

"He is over-energetic and wants to be better than his brother,"

Posey said. "I'd say he was spying for himself. He probably was down there on trips to get maps and documents. I said 'probably.'"

Posey said Hall was a former member of CMA and the self-described leader of the so-called Phoenix Battalion, an outfit Hall proposed 18 months ago to the CIA and Department of Defense.

Posey described the Phoenix Battalion as a paramilitary organization to be made up of members of different nationalities and designed to help the rebels in Nicaragua.

"He would solicit funds mostly from the Jewish community in Dayton," Posey said. "As far as I know, he's the only member of it."

Hall, 49, was involved with Civilian Materiel Assistance—formerly known as Civilian Military Assistance—from April to September last year "but we quit associating with him because he has a talent for ad-libbing," Posey said.

"He was trying to get a movie made of him and he is working on a book and he was trying to put in wild accusations," Posey said. "His heart was right, but his methods were wrong. . . . He writes his proposals and then he goes up and does what he's writing."

Posey said that Hall, a silver-medalist diver in the 1960 Olympics in Rome and a former Ohio state representative, spent two months in Decatur last year "going around with me" before heading to Central America with two British citizens.

Posey's group, which he said has about 5,000 members, was organized three years ago to aid the Nicaraguan rebels with non-military supplies, such as food and clothing.